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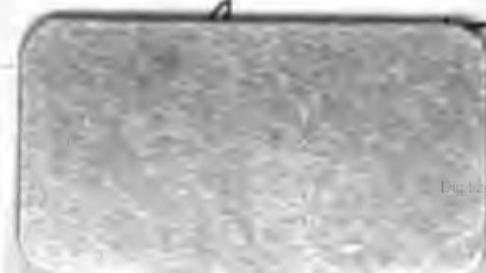
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FROM

Rev. Wm. S. Perry,



*Cover.*

**THE HAND BOOK OF HORSEMANSHIP.**







THE  
HAND BOOK OF  
HORSEMANSHIP.

CONTAINING  
PLAIN PRACTICAL RULES FOR RIDING,  
AND HINTS TO THE READER ON THE  
SELECTION OF HORSES.

---

BY

H. R. HERSHBERGER,

*Instructor of Riding at the U. S. Military Academy.*

---

WITH CUTS, ILLUSTRATING THE VARIOUS KINDS OF BITS, PACES  
OR GAITS OF THE HORSE, AND PRACTICES FOR THE  
ACCOMPLISHED HORSEMAN.

LONDON:  
HENRY G. CLARKE, & CO., PUBLISHERS.

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1845.

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Gift of  
Rev. Wm. S. Perry  
of Watertown.

## PREFACE.

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AFTER a connection of nearly nine years with the Cavalry Service, and a close observance of everything relating to Horsemanship, the Author of this work has endeavoured to convey practical information on all Equestrian Exercises by an easy and progressive method.

To make the work more intelligible and interesting to all admirers of the Horse and his performances, *stable* and *jockey-terms* have been substituted for all hard names ; and as it is almost exclusively devoted to the Art of Riding, any reference to the veterinary art and all anatomical descriptions, with their technicalities, have been studiously avoided.

These instructions are arranged on a concise and comprehensive plan, and all extraneous or superfluous matter is entirely excluded; so that the reader as he advances, can see these principles clearly and perspicuously elucidated.

The points of the Horse, indicating his action, strength, wind, &c., as exhibited in his external structure, can be advantageously studied even by the superficial observer.

The practices in Leaping are more particularly adapted for the amusement and instruction of Volunteer Cavalry.

In order to preserve the methodical arrangement of the course of instruction, and facilitate the study, some remarks on the Conformation of the Horse, his Defects and Vices, with their remedies, &c., are contained in separate Chapters, interspersed throughout the work.

## **CONTENTS.**

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<b>Chapter I.—Section I.—The Points of the Horse explained.</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
<b>Chapter II.—Section I.—Horse Equipments.—II.—The Bridle.—III.—The Bit.—IV.—The Bit and its various Parts.</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>Chapter III.—Section I.—On the Conformation of the Horse.—II.—To Hold the Horse.—III.—To Lead the Horse.—IV.—To Vault on the Horse.—V.—To Vault off the Horse.—VI.—To Mount the Horse with the aid of Stirrupa.—VII.—Position in the Saddle.—VIII—Position of the Bridle Hand.—IX—To Adjust and Hold the Reins.—X.—To Dismount.—XI.—To Shorten and Lengthen the Snaffle Reins, &amp;c.—XII.—To Cross the Reins in either Hand.—XIII.—The Seat and Balance.—XIV.—Effects of the Reins and Legs combined.—XV.—The Bridle Hand and Aids.—XVI.—The use of the Stirrup</b>	

and how to be adjusted.—XVII.—Position of the foot in the Stirrup.—XVIII.—The use of the Spurs and where to be applied. . . . . Page 25

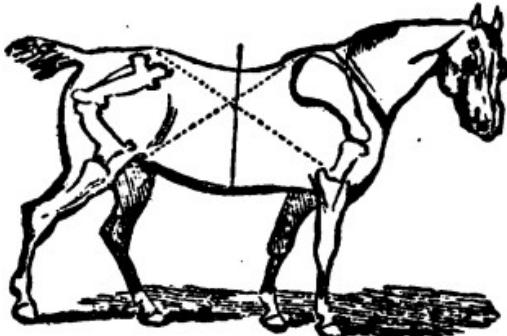
Chapter IV.—Section I.—The Management of the Horse.—II.—The Walk.—III.—Turns in the Walk.—IV.—Stops.—V.—To Back the Horse.—VI.—The Trot.—VII.—The Gallop.—VIII.—Starts, Turns, Stops, &c.—IX.—Leaping.—X.—To Passage or Move the Horse sidewise. . . . . Page 37

Chapter V.—Section I.—On the Vices and Defects of the Horse. . . . . Page 57

## CHAPTER I.

### ON THE POINTS OF THE HORSE.

It will be observed that the shoulder blade and the lower bone of the shoulder are not connected together in a straight line, but form a very considerable angle with each other. This angular construction is also in the hinder quarters. (*See plate.*)



The oblique or slanting shoulder is indispensable in the horse from which action and speed are required. The stride of the animal depends much on the elevation of the fore parts; for in proportion as the point of the shoulder is brought forward and elevated will be the forward action and elevation of the limb, or the space passed over at every effort.

In the upright shoulder it is scarcely carried beyond the point at which it is placed in the cut, and, consequently, the horse cannot have *reaching powers*.

There is less concussion when the shoulder is placed

well forward. The horse is also safer; for having less weight lying before the legs, he is not so *likely* to have the centre of gravity thrown before them by any accidental trip; besides, the rider is obliged to sit well to the rear of the shoulder point.

Horses with upright shoulders have more muscle than those with oblique ones.

The rising and reaching powers in the fore parts depend more upon the obliquity of the shoulders than the bulk of muscle.

Horses of action, therefore, have oblique or slanting shoulders, those for draught upright and muscular ones.

The elbow joint being the centre of motion, it is important that the distance from that point to the withers should be great, as the whole of the lower part of the leg is to be raised.

This action is on the principle of the lever. It will appear obvious to the reader that, in proportion as the weight is more distant from the centre of motion, the greater degree of energy must be exerted to raise it; likewise, that the greatest advantage is derived when the power is applied in a line perpendicular to the arm of the lever. A deep elbow, therefore, indicates power of action.

The arm should be long and muscular, for in proportion to the length of muscle is the degree of contraction of which it is capable; and in proportion to the degree of contraction of muscle will be the extent of motion in the part of the limb beneath. This formation is indispensable in the racer and hunter.

A horse with a short arm will be found deficient in stride.

As it is essential for the haunch-bones to be oblique for the more advantageous action of the muscles, it is necessary to look for depth of hip, by drawing a line from the loins to the point of buttock. The strength of these parts (as in the shoulder) consists more in the advantageous direction of the bones than in the bulk of muscle.

The action of these bones is also on the principle of the lever; consequently, it becomes important to select a horse with a deep and long quarter; the shorter the leg below the hock, the less muscular exertion is required to raise it.

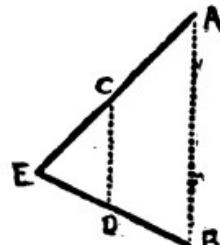
The stifle joint should be on a vertical line with the haunch or round-bone, and from the latter point to the hip or haunch-bone, cannot be too great.

The stifle joint should be on a vertical line with the haunch or round-bone.

To illustrate the action of the fore and hind quarters more fully, the following figure will represent the shoulder-blade and shoulder-bone, which form an angle, thus:—

By applying a force at A and B, the extremities can be brought together with less exertion than if applied at C and D; hence it is that the points of the shoulder-blade (A) and the elbow (B) are further from the point of the shoulder (E) in horses of action and speed than in the common draught horse.

The longer these bones are, and the greater the distance the points A and B are separated, the longer, of course, must the muscle be to bind them; and the longer the



muscle, the more capable it is of contraction ; and, consequently, the less exertion is required to raise the leg.

If these points were closer, the contraction of the muscle would be much less, and the point of the shoulder could not be sufficiently projected and elevated ; nor could the leg be raised and advanced to make a good stride.

The reader must now perceive that the action of the bones, in the angular position they are placed in the shoulders and hinder quarters, is upon the principle of mechanical forces. The elbow is the centre of motion ; and at each contraction of the muscle connecting the arm of the lever or shoulder-blade and the arm, the leg is raised, and the point of the shoulder projected and elevated.

As the horse breathes only through the nostril, it should be wide and expanded. This is a very striking feature in the thorough-bred horse. The nostril should be thin and elastic, so that it may more readily yield when the necessity of the animal requires a greater supply of air.

The lips should be thin and without wrinkle ; for, if thick and hanging, they are almost insensible to the bit.

A long and narrow mouth is desirable, as it indicates sensitive bars. A horse with a short and wide mouth bears heavily upon the bit. A wide underjaw shows a capacious windpipe, so essential to the respiratory powers of the horse.

The eye should be large and somewhat prominent, and the eyelid thin and delicate. The expression of the eye enables us to judge pretty accurately of his

temper and disposition. If much of the white be seen, it is objectionable.

A long neck is preferable to a short one ; for there are few horses of extraordinary speed that have not a long and slender neck. The race horse, at the top of his speed, extends his neck in order that the air-passages may be as straight as possible.

The back should be straight and short, though sufficiently long to admit the saddle between the shoulders and loins.

Hollow-backed horses are generally easy movers, but they cannot carry a heavy load nor endure much hard work.

A horse that is *ribbed home*, or where there is little space between the ribs and hip bone, is preferable, when endurance is required or weight to carry. He is "easy kept," but deficient in *bottom* and speed.

The distance between these points is too short to allow a full action of the hinder parts in *gathering*.

Were a horse perfectly formed in the hind quarters for speed, his gathering or propelling powers would be materially diminished, if "short coupled."

A judge of a horse will at once perceive the defect in a *roach-backed* horse. When the curve is outward, it is difficult to adjust the saddle properly ; for, as his head is carried too low, it is thrown upon the withers. His hind legs are too much under him, and he frequently over-reaches himself.

The loins should be full, broad and muscu'ar. The strength of the back and the action of the hinder extremities depend much upon this point.

A horseman never fails to select a horse that is "wide across the kidneys."

When the horse is somewhat drooped in the croup and wide in the quarter, he is termed ragged-hipped. This materially diminishes his beauty, but indicates great powers from the angular position of the bones.

It is important that the stifle muscles *show full* when standing behind the horse. As this is a point in beauty, horses of this description are much sought after for their fine appearance in harness.

The tibia, or leg bone, should be long, and the muscles covering it prominent and bulging, not tapering.

The hock should be deep in proportion to the length and breadth of muscles in the quarter. The cannon should be short and flat.

The pasterns of the hackney and traveller should be short and somewhat slanting, yet far less so than those of the racer and hunter.

The oblique or slanting pastern is essential to pleasant action, as there is less concussion.

The foot should be in proportion to the bulk of the horse—open at the heel and high.

The chest should be moderately large. A horse with a very large chest will answer the purposes of draught; but he is not adapted for the saddle, at least when speed and endurance are the objects. He will have too much weight to be impelled, and furthermore, cannot endure the constant shock upon his fore legs.

The most desirable form will be depth at the girth and a swelling out, or barreling, behind the elbow: also a wide chest, or, at least, so much so as will preclude the possibility of an interference in the fore feet (which is common with narrow cheasted horses) when turning suddenly to the right or left.

A judge of the horse dislikes to see the chest or breast bone too high from the ground; or, in other words, "too much daylight under him."

Horses with a long arm are generally rough and unpleasant in their gaits; the action being high or lofty, with little knee action.

A hackney or lady's horse should have a short arm and a long cannon, which will give sufficient knee action for safety and speed.

The knee should be wide, compared with the arm above, and the cannon, or shank bone, below.

## CHAPTER II.

### SECTION I.—HORSE EQUIPMENTS.

The saddle should be proportioned to the size of the horse, and so constructed as to press only upon the ribs on either side of the backbone, leaving a thorough channel above the spine.

The seat of the saddle should be long enough to admit of a free action of the rider's thighs when galloping; if too short, the rider's position will be constrained. The highest part of the saddle should be behind its centre, for the rider will then be enabled to seat himself without stirrups or effort.

In adjusting the saddle upon the horse's back, the pressure should be entirely clear of the shoulders and loins. If the saddle is placed upon the withers, the action of the shoulders is confined; and if the weight is thrown upon the loins, which is the weakest part of the back, the horse will tire the sooner. Besides, it places the rider in rear of the centre of motion, which diminishes the clasp of the thighs and calves, and he becomes the sport of the horse's movements.

This admits of easy illustration. For example, stride a pole six feet long, which is turned to and fro horizontally or vertically, on a pivot fixed in its centre, and you will at once perceive that the nearer you ap-

proximate the pivot or centre of motion, the easier you can preserve your equilibrium.

The pommel should be as low as possible, but not resting on the point of the shoulders. A high pommel always threatens the rider with rupture.

A high cantle is also objectionable, as it tends to throw the rider off his balance, when in the act of passing his leg over in mounting and dismounting, particularly if the horse is restive.

A high cantle properly constructed is, however, a great support to the rider on a long journey, without being an injury to the horse.

The panels of the saddle should be sufficiently wide not to cut or bury into the horse's ribs; but if too wide and extended below the point of pressure, the saddle bulges, and consequently the clasp of the rider is diminished.

The skirts or flaps should be long and wide enough to prevent the rider's clothes being soiled; and padding between them and the horse's sides, below the panels, should be very thin.

If the skirts extend below the pad or blanket, the surcingle (if used) should pass through holes made in the skirts a few inches above the lower part of the pad or blanket, so that they may not chafe the horse's sides.

The stirrup leathers should be broad, and made of strong and firm materials, not elastic.

The buckle may be placed near the stirrup-iron. This precludes the necessity of raising the saddle-skirt when the rider wishes to lengthen or shorten the stirrup leather; and can even be done with facility when mounted.

The stirrup-irons should be in size proportioned to the rider's feet; but they should be so shaped that the rider can at all times and under all circumstances, disengage the feet from them.

The distance from the bottom iron, inside to the eye of the stirrup, should be, at least five and a half inches; for there is safety in a high stirrup, as the rider could not be dragged if unhorsed.

The crupper, independently of its being an ornament, serves to keep the saddle in its proper place on a horse that is lower in the withers than the croup, or while on descending ground. It is absolutely necessary for the heavily laden horse travelling over an uneven country.

The breast strap is also useful, and, in fact, indispensable, on horses that are higher in the withers than the croup, particularly on ascending ground, preventing the saddle from slipping on the horse's loins. It should always be slackened when the horse drinks, and never be so tight as to impede his breathing.

#### SECTION II.—THE BRIDLE.

A bridle should consist of a bit with a curb and a bridoon or snaffle, with separate headstalls united by one brow band, each with distinct reins; one of this description is sometimes called "a double bitted bridle."

#### SECTION III.—THE BIT.

The bit is composed of five principal pieces, viz.: the mouth piece, the branches, the rings, the curb, and

the cross-bar. • The mouth piece is divided into, barrel and crook ; the barrel acting upon the bars and the crook against the *roof* of the mouth.

A medium bit has the branches straight, or when the eye of the ring is in the prolongation of the line passing through the centre of the bit and the eye of the cheek pieces.

A bit is mild when the ring at the lower extremity of the branch is in rear of a vertical line drawn through the eye of the cheek piece and the centre of the bit.

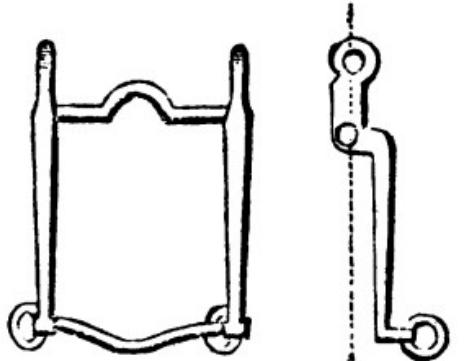
A bit is severe when the ring of the branch is in front of the vertical line.

(See plate.)

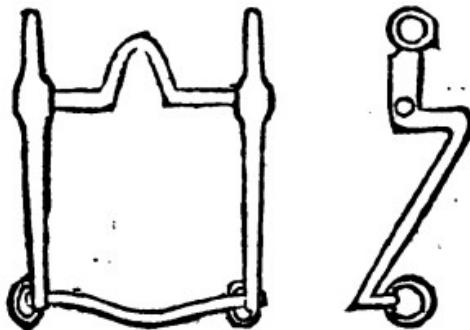
To render the severe bit more powerful, the barrel should be straight and small near the branches, and the crook elevated.

To render the mild bit milder, the barrel should be large near the branches, and almost without crook.

\*The cross-bar serves to strengthen the branches of the bit and prevent them from hooking the reins of a horse.



(See plate.)



\*The cross-bar serves to strengthen the branches of the bit and prevent them from hooking the reins of a horse.

It will be observed that the action of the bit is on the principle of the lever, and that it is rendered more or less powerful, according to the position or distance of the eye in the cheek piece from the barrel or fulcrum.

The longer the cheek piece (that portion of the branch above the barrel,) and the higher the eye is placed in it, the greater the resistance to the branches below the barrel, and consequently the stronger will be the impression upon the bars and chin. If the cheek piece is short, the barrel yields to the motion of the branches, and therefore produces less effect.

The Spanish bit (used by the Camanche and Pawnee Indians to break wild horses) has a piece of iron fixed with a hinge to the top of the crook which encircles the lower jaw and acts as a curb. When the branches of the bit are drawn to the rear, the crook becomes elevated, and consequently this piece of iron presses powerfully against the chin.

All bits should be wide enough to admit of a free play of the cheek piece. If too wide, however, the horse becomes annoyed and attempts to catch the branches between his teeth.

The barrel of the bit should act upon the bars about a finger's breadth, or three-fourths of an inch above the tushes and double the distance above the corner teeth in mares, which have no tushes.

When the bit is too high, the horse is gagged and holds up his nose. In no case should the crook touch the palate.

The horse will be restive if the bit is so low as to jar against the tushes. He will also be inattentive to his steps and apt to stumble or fall while catching at the bit.

The curb should be hooked underneath the snaffle or bridoon, but it should not be so tight as to compress the chin when the bridle hand does not act.

The bridoon or snaffle should be in the corner of the horse's mouth without pressing against or wrinkling it.

The bit (or curb-bit as it is usually termed) powerfully controls the horse; it draws in his head and beautifully arches his neck; it makes him "light in hand," and his movements easy and graceful.

With the bridoon or snaffle, the horse can take a natural position and act with more freedom. This bridle is preferable to any other, particularly when riding over uneven ground, where there are many obstacles, and also in leaping; *but if the rider cannot control his horse, he must resort to the "CURB-BIT."*

#### SECTION IV.—ON THE BIT AND ITS VARIOUS PARTS.

Bits are variously constructed to operate with different degrees of power on the several parts of the horse's mouth.

The barrel of the bit, when acting equally upon both bars of the mouth, tends to check, stop, or back the horse; and when only one bar is affected, the horse turns his head to the side.

The reader will observe that in some bits there is a crook,\* which operates against the *roof* of the mouth, counteracting, in a certain degree, the effect of the barrel.

\* The curb has the same effect, but in a milder degree, the chin being less sensitive than the *roof* of the mouth.

## THE HAND BOOK

The question may be asked, why this counteraction, one tending to destroy the effect of the other? We answer, that if there were no crook used on some horses, they would, when the barrel of the bit acts, draw the chin too near the breast; and by thus confining the action of the shoulders, the animal would become inattentive to his steps, and be liable to stumble.

Now, as the crook has the effect of keeping a horse's *head up* in a proper position when the bridle hand acts, the reader will perceive the necessity of a bit with the crook *reversed*, on rearing horses.

It cannot be too often impressed on the reader's mind, to study closely, first, the nature and shape of the horse's mouth;\* and secondly, to ascertain the result of a certain combination of powers as indicated in the external points of the horse, and the manner or kind of action—whether up, as in a rearing horse, or downward before, as in a plunging one.

- The lips and tongue are the hardest parts of the mouth upon which the bit acts; the bar, roof, and chin, the most sensitive.

## CHAPTER III.

### SECTION I.—ON THE CONFORMATION OF THE HORSE.

As the conformation of the horse generally indicates the kind of mouth, it will be necessary to point out some of his most prominent faults.

If a horse has a short neck, clumsy limbs, heavy shoulders, or is higher in the croup than the withers, it is to be presumed that he has a bad mouth. He will bear heavily upon the bit, making use of (what jockeys term) "a fifth leg." A horse of this character always "bears watching," and the rider must keep in mind the golden rule of horsemanship—"never trust to your horse."

He will prove an unsafe leaper; for, lacking confidence in his fore parts, he seeks the aid of the bit, holds down his head so as not to see the obstacle in time to measure his leap, and, consequently, either shies, blunders, or falls over it.

To remedy this defect, select a powerful bit with short branches. This will enable the rider to draw the horse's chin towards his neck, instead of his breast.

As the horse feels the extra weight thrown upon the shoulders by the croup, the rider must favour his leap by inclining the body a little backward as the horse descends.

Horses, on the contrary, higher in the withers than

the croup,\* are generally *up-headed*, and have a fine fore hand. Horses of this description show little strength in the hinder parts; they have much knee action, are tender-mouthed, and apt to rear. A mild bit will be most suitable.

As a general rule, horses with short mouths, squat bodies, and thick, hanging lips, have round and callous bars; those of lofty action, long mouths, thin and compressed lips, sharp and sensitive bars.

#### SECTION II.

##### TO HOLD A HORSE BY THE BRIDLE WHEN THE REINS ARE ON HIS NECK, OR OVER THE POMMEL OF THE SADDLE.

The person should place himself on the near or left side of the horse, and grasp, with his right hand, both reins of the *bridoon* or *snaffle*, underneath and about six inches from the horse's mouth.

When the reins are not over his neck or pommel, but turned over his head, the person should hold the surplus part, or loop-end of the reins, in the left hand.

#### SECTION III.—TO LEAD THE HORSE.

Hold the reins in the same manner prescribed for *holding the horse*.

If the horse starts suddenly, or attempts to jump away, the person should place his right shoulder against him. In this position, he will be enabled to hold the horse, or, at least render his pranks harmless.

- Horses of this kind are generally upon their haunches; they can reach, but cannot gather.

## SECTION IV.—TO VAULT ON THE HORSE.

Place yourself close to the horse's left or near shoulder, seize with the snaffle or bridoon reins, a lock of the mane with the left hand near the withers, the right hand on the withers or pommel of the saddle; then slightly bend the knees and spring up so as to bring the body straight and the arms extended; and now pass the right leg, well extended, over the horse's croup without touching it, and seat yourself lightly.

The effort of the arms and legs should not be made at the same instant. The strength of the arms should be applied immediately after the height has been attained by that of the legs; for, if both were applied together, you would push yourself from the horse. Endeavour to keep the body erect, so as not to throw the breast across the horse and scramble up.

## SECTION V.—TO VAULT OFF THE HORSE.

Place the right hand on the pommel or withers, and take with the left hand, a lock of the mane with the reins; incline the body forward, and, at the same time, raise it upon the right arm; now pass the right leg carefully over the croup, bring the heels together for an instant, and then descend to the ground.

SECTION VI.—TO MOUNT THE HORSE WITH THE AID OF  
THE STIRRUPS.

Place yourself opposite to and face the horse's left or near shoulder, draw up the snaffle reins gently with the right hand (in order to equalize them, and that

the horse may feel the bit according to his sensibility;) take a lock of the mane, with the reins in your left hand, a few inches in advance of the pommel; step back with the right foot, seize the stirrup with the right hand to steady it while placing the left foot a third of the way in.\* After having the foot securely in the stirrup, hold, with the right hand, the *off cantle* of the saddle, and close to the horse's shoulder; spring from the right foot, and rise erect in the stirrup, bring the heels together for an instant, then pass the right leg, well extended, over the croup, at the same time shifting the right hand to the pommel or *off holster*, and seat yourself gently.†

\* Previous to placing the foot in the stirrup, take a glance at the equipments and satisfy yourself that they are properly adjusted. This precaution frequently saves trouble and prevents accidents.

Through the carelessness or ignorance of grooms, the bits are sometimes placed too high or too low; the curb and throat strap too tight or too loose, or the girths insecure.

† Short persons, when preparing to mount, should place themselves near the horse's left flank, hold the end of the reins on the cantle with the right hand, take the stirrup with the *left hand*, place the left foot in it, close to the horse's shoulder, and seize a lock of the mane with the reins.

If the rider uses a whip, it should be held in the left hand while mounting or dismounting. The rider, holding the whip in the right hand while mounting or dismounting, frequently, and unconsciously, touches the horse's flank with it, or alarms him by *switching it* in the air.

**SECTION VII.—POSITION IN THE SADDLE.**

The body should be erect without stiffness; the small of the back somewhat drawn in; the chest protruded, and the shoulders square to the front; the buttocks bearing equally and well forward, the inner parts of the thighs embracing the saddle, and the legs hanging naturally. The loins should be well supported, and the weight of the body should rest as much as possible in the centre of the saddle, and the elbows should be steady and free from constraint.

**SECTION VIII.—POSITION OF THE BRIDLE-HAND.**

The elbow should hang naturally, and without pressure to the body; and the hand should be on a hori-

zontal line with the elbow, or about four inches above the pommel. The palm of the hand should be turned sufficiently to the right to keep the elbow close and in proper position ; the thumb pointing to the horse's off ear.

This is the strongest position in which the hand and arm can be placed ; and, from this position, the rider is enabled to execute all the movements of the bridle hand without abruptness.

#### SECTION IX.—TO ADJUST AND HOLD THE REINS.

Take the *bit* reins, with the right hand, at the knob or end, and raise it in order to straighten the reins and bring the flat sides together ; place the little finger of the left hand between them, the back of the hand being to the front ; close the hand, and let the surplus part of the reins hang over the second joint of the first finger. Seize the bridoon or snaffle reins with the right hand, and draw them over the first finger and through the left hand (the surplus part hanging below the hand) ; and now close the fingers and press the thumb on both reins. Drop the right hand to the side, in rear of the thigh.

Both bits should not act at the same time ; but the reins should be so adjusted as to make either bit take effect by slightly turning the hand towards the body (nails upwards) for the curb, and upwards and towards the body (nails downwards) for the bridoon or snaffle.

To shorten or lengthen the hold of either rein, take the surplus part with the right hand and shift the bridle hand. The rider should support the horse with

the right hand, and *feel his steps* while slipping the left hand smoothly down the reins.

#### SECTION X.—TO DISMOUNT.

Seize the surplus parts of the reins with the right hand and place it on the off holster, or against the saddle in front of the right thigh; at the same time slip the left hand along the reins, and grasp a lock of the mane, disengage the right foot from the stirrup, and pass the right leg, well extended, over the croup, and without touching the horse, shifting the right hand, with the reins, to the cantle. Now bring the right heel against the left, remain an instant erect in the stirrup, then descend lightly to the ground on the right foot, and disengage the left, placing both reins over the pommel of the saddle.

When the horse stands alone, or when led, the stirrups should be crossed over the saddle.

Before using the stirrups and *full bridle*, the beginner should cross the stirrups over the horse's withers and separate the bridoon or snaffle reins, holding one in each hand, the surplus parts of each passing over the second joints of the first fingers, the thumbs pressing upon them. The right arm must be held in a position prescribed for the left, and the hands about six inches apart. Spurs should not be used until the rider is confirmed in his seat.

#### SECTION XI.—TO SHORTEN OR LENGTHEN THE SNAPPLE REINS WHEN SEPARATED.

Seize the left rein with the forefinger and thumb of the right hand, shift the left hand along the rein and

replace the right hand. To shorten or lengthen the right rein, take it with the forefinger and thumb of the left hand, shift the right hand along the rein and replace the left hand.

#### SECTION XIII.—TO CROSS THE REINS IN EITHER HAND.

To cross the reins in the left hand, draw the right rein over the first finger and through the left hand, the surplus part hanging below the little finger on the near side of the withers, and drop the right hand to the side.

To cross the reins in the right hand, draw the left rein over the first finger and through the right hand, the surplus part hanging below on the off side of the withers, and drop the left hand to the side.

#### SECTION XIV.—THE SEAT AND BALANCE.

In the first place, it is necessary for the rider to seat himself on that part of the horse which is the centre of motion, and from which he would with most difficulty be shaken.

The seat is to be maintained only by a proper balance of the body, the clasp of the thighs and calves enabling him to recover his equilibrium and to adapt it to the most violent counteractions of the horse. Under no circumstances whatever should the rider depend on the stirrups to preserve his seat.

It is a very common error with inexperienced riders to hold on to the bridle or grasp the pommel in order to recover their seats, instead of accommodating themselves to the motions of the horse.

A sudden and unexpected movement of the horse always deranges the seat of the rider more or less, but it can be recovered by a pressure of the thighs and calves and a suppleness of the back.

The rider's movements should harmonize with those of the animal, and his position should be easy to himself and the horse; all of which are most calculated to ensure his own safety, and gain a perfect command over the animal.

In short, the rider should rise, and descend, advance, and halt *with* and not *after* the horse. It is impossible to sit carelessly and give the proper attention to the bridle hand: and with an inexperienced or ungraceful rider a horse never appears to good advantage.

#### SECTION XIV.—EFFECTS OF THE REINS AND LEGS COMBINED.

By slightly raising, and at the same time drawing the bridle hand towards the body, and closing the legs, the rider prepares the horse for any movement. It is called *gathering the horse*, or, in other words, *pushing him to the bit*.

If the rider wishes to move forward after having gathered the horse, he should lower the bridle hand and close the legs behind the girths, or give spur (according to the sensibility of the horse) until he obeys. After the horse has obeyed, the rider must confine him to the pace he wishes, by gradually raising and drawing the bridle hand towards his body, and relaxing the pressure of the legs.

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## SECTION XV.—ON THE BRIDLE HAND, AND LEGS.

It will be observed that, by raising and drawing the bridle hand toward the body, the horse slackens pace; by increasing the effect of the bridle hand, he stops; and if still more augmented, he backs.

By inclining the bridle hand to the right or left, and a little forward, the rider causes the horse to describe a circle upon his hind legs or heels; if the leg or spur is applied on the side to which the turn is made, he will describe a circle upon his centre; and if the bridle hand is kept firm and steady, and the leg or spur applied a little more to the rear, he will make the circle upon his fore legs.

The reader will very readily perceive, that by inclining the bridle hand to the left, the right rein becomes pressed against the horse's neck, while the left is slackened; now, instead of the horse being governed by the action of the rein against his neck (*as some horsemen affirm*), the bit acts upon the right side of the mouth only, and consequently he turns to the left to avoid or free himself from the pressure. *Vice versa*, turning the horse to the right.

All operations of the bridle hand should be firm, gentle, and light; and the transition gradual. The rider should frequently *feel the horse* with a gentle hand, which will make him hold up his head for the bits to act advantageously; keep him *light in hand*, and prevent the necessity of passing abruptly from one extreme to another.

Were the rider to go at once from a firm hand to a slack one, the horse would be deprived of the support

to which he trusted, and consequently be precipitated on his shoulders so as to stumble or fall. On the contrary, were he to change suddenly and abruptly from a slack rein to a tight one, he would not only injure the horse's mouth, but throw him upon his haunches with a shock, and perhaps fling himself over his head.

#### SECTION XVI.—THE USE OF THE STIRRUPS, AND HOW TO BE ADJUSTED.

The stirrup is intended only to support the weight of the leg, enable the rider to mount and dismount, and, in extreme cases, to assist him in *regaining*, not *maintaining* his equilibrium.

It should hang with the *eye* inside and the flat sides of the leather against the saddle skirts; and when the rider's foot is in it, the flat side, instead of the edge of the leather, should be next to his leg, always placing the foot in front of the outside of the iron.

When the rider stands erect in the stirrups, the space between his *fork* or crotch, and the seat of the saddle, should be four inches or the breadth of his hand.

#### SECTION XVII.—POSITION OF THE FOOT IN THE STIRRUP.

The foot should be inserted about one-third of its length, or the *ball* resting upon the bottom iron; the heel should be about an inch lower than the toe, and the foot parallel to the horse's side.

By keeping the heel below the toe, the foot remains in the stirrup without effort; and the horse is more secure from the constant pricking of the spur.

If the stirrup is too long, or the foot not inserted far enough, it cannot support the weigh of the leg; besides, the rider runs the risk of losing it at every sudden movement of the horse. If the foot is too far through, the leg cannot be supported

The practice of standing and rising in the stirrups is common in turf and road riding; and as there is but the one simple movement of the horse, "going a-head" on level ground, an ordinary horseman can *sit him* with *apparent* skill and security to himself; but the accomplished and scientific horseman alone can conform and accommodate himself to the violent and sometimes unexpected counteractions of the animal in leaping, turning, halting, shying, &c.

#### SECTION XVIII.—THE USE OF THE SPURS, AND WHERE TO BE APPLIED.

Spurs can be employed only with much safety and advantage by accomplished horsemen. When the spurs become necessary, as a means of chastisement, or to urge the horse (the pressure of the legs being insufficient), they should be applied a few inches behind the girth, and *with a touch capable of producing the desired effect.*

The spur should be applied with a force according to the sensibility of the horse, not "always vigorously."

To insure the action of the spur, the rider should turn the toe a little out.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SECTION I.—ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE HORSE.

Before treating of the horse's paces, we deem it proper to say a few words on the subject of *animations*, *caresses*, *corrections*, &c.

A gentle pressure of the legs, a kind word from the rider, or *switching* the whip, animates the horse.

Caresses are employed to dispel the fears of the animal and to give him confidence, or show him that the rider is satisfied with his performance.

These can be effected by the rider speaking to the horse in a kind, mild tone; relinquishing the pressure of the legs, and patting or stroking his neck.

Corrections are whipping, spurring, and speaking sharply to the horse.

Instead, however, of spurring or whipping the horse too much, to correct him in his movements, the rider should oppose him by restraint and make him perform directly the contrary. For example: if the horse backs contrary to the will of the rider, he should first apply the whip or spurs; if, by that means, he does not succeed in urging him forward, he must be assisted in his backing until he becomes heartily tired of it. Likewise, if the horse is disposed to turn around and around, the rider should also help him in that, if the contrary means (applying the opposite spur and rein) are ineffectual.

If a horse is unwilling to move forward, the rider should make him passage or go sideways to the right or left, then urge him to the front.

When the whip is employed as a chastisement, it should be applied smartly around the belly behind the girth, or over the shoulders ; but *never over the head*.

Some horses disregard the spurs but fly at the whip, and *vice versa*. The rider, consequently, should use that which is best calculated to produce the desired effect. If either or both fail, and the horse is found to be decidedly obstinate and restive, we would recommend to the rider to part with him immediately, or at least, not attempt to conquer him *effectually* under the saddle ; for it must be within the knowledge of every horseman, or dealer in horses, that a tricky, *mulish*, or restive horse, may be partially subdued and broken, but at some subsequent period will renew his old mischievous capers.

In all corrections and chastisements, the rider should endeavour rather to work upon the mind than the body of the horse.

#### SECTION II.—THE WALK.

In this pace there are four distinct treads or beats marked as each foot touches the ground.

First, the right or off fore foot ;\* secondly, the left or near hind foot ; thirdly, the near or left fore foot ; and lastly, the right or off hind foot.

\* This order is reversed when the near fore foot commences the movement.

This pace is performed with the least exertion to the horse, only one foot at a time being off the ground.



The horse should put the feet flatly to the ground, in regular time, his steps being quick and animated, and measuring exact distances.

To perfect the horse in the walk, the rider should be steady in his seat, animate him with the legs or whip, and sustain him with the bridle hand.

If the rein is drawn too tight, the horse will be thrown upon his haunches, thereby diminishing the stride; if too slack, he will extend his neck, carry his head low, be inattentive to his steps, move slovenly, and occasionally stumble.

If the horse is too much urged, he will trot.

#### SECTION III.—TURNS IN THE WALK.

All turns should be made slowly, combining the aid of the legs with a firm and steady bridle hand.

In executing the turns with the bridoon or snaffle reins separated, the hand to the side the turn is made, should be carried out and a little lower than the other, which must be kept in the original position for the purpose of supporting the horse after the turn is made. The elbows, of course, should be close to the body.

With the *full bridle* (bit and bridoon,) or the snaffle reins crossed in either hand, the hand should be carried forward, slightly raised, and then to the side; all comprehending but one motion.

In these turns, the horse must be sustained by gently applying the means of turning to the right after the turn to the left is executed; and *vice versa* turning to the right. This principle must be observed in all the movements of the horse, and throughout all the paces.\*

The rider must now perceive that the horse makes the turns or wheels upon three distinct pivots; his centre, on his fore feet, and on his hind feet; and that he directs these movements, *before his own person*, by the bridle hand, and behind it by the spurs or whip.

The aids of the bridle hand and legs must correspond, and with a degree of force necessary only to carry them into effect.

If the force is insufficient, the horse will merely advance or describe a circle, or an arc of one, ~~more~~ larger than the rider intends. On the contrary, if the hand is abrupt, and the leg not applied to support him, he will interfere and trip himself.

At the termination of these turns or wheels, the

- For a fuller explanation of these principles, see *the Gallop.*

**bridle hand and legs must instantly resume their proper or original position.**

The utility and necessity of the turns upon the horse's own centre, will appear more obvious in the quicker paces, and when the rider is fencing or using the sabre in the saddle.

The greatest precision and delicacy are requisite in the application of the aids. If one leg is closer than the other, the horse will throw his haunches out or in, which will cause a shortening of the step in one of the hind legs, and consequently the stride will be diminished and the cadence lost.

#### SECTION IV.—STOPS.

In ordinary riding, the stop or halt is made gradually, and without shock to the rider or horse.

To stop a horse without injury to himself or the rider, his haunches should be brought under him, by closing the legs, and the rein drawn firmly and steadily, and the rider clinging or embracing the horse with his legs and throwing himself somewhat in the cantle, *without pressing in the stirrups.*



If the rider can halt within a space of eight feet from a *full gallop*, and maintain his position, it will show the superiority of the bridle hand over the horse, and should be termed the very *acme of horsemanship*.

Were the rider to approach suddenly and unexpectedly the brink of a precipice, a gully, or any other obstacle, he would then discover (perhaps too late) how indispensably necessary it is, not only to be a scientific horseman, but to have his horse trained, and at once obedient to the bridle hand under all circumstances and in every emergency.

#### SECTION V.—TO BACK THE HORSE.

In backing, there are two distinct beats of the feet; the horse raises and steps, first the left or near hind leg and the right or off fore leg at the same time, next, the right or off hind leg and the left or near fore leg. This order is reversed if the right or off hind leg begins the movement.

For a horse to back properly, he should be upon his haunches, have one of his hind legs always under him on which to rest and balance, and to impel or push himself backwards; his head steady, and his legs gathered.

To aid and assist the horse in this movement, the rider should incline the body slightly forward, the hand a little lower than usual, the reins equal and steadily, and *yield and check* instead of making a *dead pull*.

- The accomplished horseman can, in a few trials, teach his horse to this perfection in the halt.

To prevent the horse from swerving, the rider should press the legs gently to the sides in rear of the girth.

If he throws the croup to the right, close the right leg or spur: if to the left, the left leg or spur.\*

#### SECTION VI.—THE TROT.

There are two beats of the feet in a trot: first, the off fore and the near hind feet together; next, the near fore and the off hind feet—two legs crosswise being off the ground, and two on.

When the rider wishes to urge the horse to go faster than he can by moving one foot after the other, as in the walk, he should raise the bridle hand and close the legs, or give spur, which will compel him to increase the pace to the trot by raising two legs at a time.

The rider should know when and how to put the horse at the *top of his speed* and not force him to *break*, when he discovers an irregularity in the beats of his feet or a loss of cadence.

The perfection of the trot depends upon the suppleness and union of action in the reaching and gathering powers of the horse.

As the horse sustains the greater portion of the weight and shock upon his fore legs, it behoves the rider to seat himself and manage the horse in such a manner as to distribute his labour equally. This is

\* The reader will bear in mind that the bridle hand causes and compels the action, and the heels or spurs direct it.

indispensably necessary, especially for horses that are higher in the withers than the croup.\*

To maintain the seat in this pace, the rider should balance himself and yield to the horse's motion by rendering the small of the back flexible, and at the same time inclining the body a little backward; not by a pressure of the knees, nor by rising and standing in the stirrups.

In the *extended* trot the horse straightens himself and moves directly forward and without restraint.

To pass to the extended trot the rider should relax the grasp of the legs gradually, and lower the ~~back~~ hand.

To move a horse to the supple trot, he must be ~~well~~ *in hand*, head up, and his hind legs brought under him by an occasional pressure of the legs or spurs.

The *trots* at right angles in the trot, should correspond with the pace; they may, however, be much slower, but never faster, except by an experienced horseman.

In road riding, the horse is not subjected to many aids of the leg and variations of the bridle as in the more complicated practices of the manege; consequently there is less skill required on the part of the rider, and therefore some deviations from the *proper* mode of riding are admissible; such as riding the stirrups at every stride of the horse, sitting ~~on~~ cantle, &c.

The danger and insecurity, however, attending the practice of riding with very short stirrups must be obvious to the reader. The shorter the stirrups,

\* See remarks on the Conformation of the Horse.

more the seat is in the cantle of the saddle, consequently the clasp of the thighs is partially lost, and the rider compelled to depend solely upon his balance.

#### SECTION VII.—THE GALLOP.

In this pace, the horse makes three quick and distinct *beats*: first the near hind foot; secondly, the near fore foot and the off hind foot, which touch the ground at the same time; and lastly, the off fore foot.\*

When the rider wishes to gallop from a halt, walk, or trot, he should first raise the bridle hand firmly, then slacken rein and close the legs, or give spur until the horse obeys (according to the sensibility of the horse), and confine him to the speed he wishes by drawing a firm rein and relaxing the pressure of the legs.

It is immaterial which foot leads when galloping on a straight line, provided the hind leg of the same side follows the fore leg.† It would be injurious to the horse, however, were he to lead always with the same leg.

When a horse gallops to the right, or on a circle, rider inclining inwards and supporting himself

\* This is the order when the off fore foot leads; it is reversed when the near fore foot is in advance.

† The horse should lead with the off fore foot on a straight line if the rider uses a sabre; for he is more braced and able to bear the additional shock on that leg—the cuts and points being made more frequently and with greater force on the right side of the horse.

with the outer thigh), he must lead with the off fore foot, followed by the hind foot of the same side. When galloping to the left, or on a circle to the left, he must lead with the near fore foot, followed by the near hind foot. This is termed *true* or *united*.

If, in galloping to the right, the horse leads with the near fore foot, or galloping to the left with the off fore foot, in advance, it is termed *false*.

If, in galloping, the horse leads with the off fore foot, followed by the near hind foot, or *vice versa*, the horse is *disunited*. (*See plate.*)



*To change the step* (the horse galloping with the off fore foot in advance), confining him to the line on which he is moving, or one parallel to it, the rider should draw the right rein and close the left leg.

By drawing the right rein with the right hand, or bearing the bridle hand to the right, the rider constrict-

the action of the right shoulder; and by closing the leg or giving spur on the left side, he prevents the horse from making a turn to the right (which he would do if the opposite leg or spur were not applied), and compels him to put forward the left leg.

The rider should change from the near to the off fore foot on the same principles, but by inverse means.

In the gallop of the racer and hunter, the limbs are extended; but in the hackney or pleasure horse, the action is more confined, and consequently the pace is much slower.

To confine the horse to the *canter*, the rider should raise the bridle hand, which throws him upon his haunches, and occasionally close the legs for the purpose of bringing the horse's legs more under him.



The *hand gallop* is a pace between the *canter* and the *extended gallop* or *run*.

The position of the horse in galloping, always calls for a corresponding one from the rider; for instance, if the horse leads with the right side, the rider's leg on that side will be more advanced than the left, and the inside of the thigh will be closer to the saddle; consequently the other thigh will be turned a little outward, and the leg further to the rear.\* The hips and upper part of the body are affected in like manner.

The degree and kind of motion depend upon the position and action of the horse. For instance, if the action is high with little stride, the rider's motion will be *vertical*; on the contrary, if forward with a long stride, *horizontal*.

The rider, while galloping, should, from time to time, glance the eye upon the ground the horse is about to pass over.

#### SECTION VIII.—STARTS, TURNS, STOPS, ETC.

To start from a halt, to a gallop, upon the circle, the rider should always put the shoulder of the horse in advance, by which he is to lead and turn the croup from the track toward the centre of the circle; draw the outer rein (so as to confine the action of that shoulder), and urge him forward with both legs or spurs—the outer leg or spur pressed the harder.

\* The rider necessarily deviates from this position (the left leg being closer and more advanced than the right) when using the sabre to the right or right rear; but the aids of the left leg and the bridle hand must be applied, lest this counteraction swerve the horse from the true direction, or change his step.

To strike the gallop from the walk or trot, the rider should raise the bridle hand and carry it outwards, applying the legs or spurs as prescribed for the *start*.

To turn the horse at right angles, or to change hands\* (being at a gallop) by crossing the circle, the rider should, when within a few paces of the opposite side of the track, raise the bridle hand and close the outer leg (sinking a little in the saddle) to make the horse change the step.†

To stop the horse from the gallop, the rider should draw the reins and prepare himself for the shock when the horse's fore feet are about to touch the ground. This is the proper time to halt, being the commencement of the cadence, and immediately before the horse gathers for another stride.

In lessening the circle, the rider must use a very delicate bridle hand and sustain the horse with the inner leg; but if, after this precaution, he should change step or *bolt*, the movement must be recommenced until the horse learns what is required of him.

#### SECTION IX.—LEAPING.

The most secure position for the rider in all leaps, as in all critical situations, is to yield to the seat by bending the loins, to cling with the thighs and calves of the legs, and to accommodate himself to the horse's motions, and not depend upon the stirrups for support.

• Galloping with the right side toward the centre of the circle, is termed to the right hand, and *vice versa*.

† This should be practised upon a large circle, at first, then gradually diminished (as the rider and horse improve) until the horse turns upon his own centre.

The reader should bear in mind that the weight of the body alone presses in the seat, and that a pressure in the stirrups tends to lift him from the saddle and lessen the clasp of the thighs.

Leaping a ditch, gully, or space, the rider should give the reins (to enable the horse to extend his neck, see the object, and to measure his steps), maintain his seat erect, yield the body slightly, and cling with the legs. While the horse is descending, the reins should be gathered in order to support and check him after he strikes the ground.



We must again observe that the stirrups are no security to the rider's seat in any situation whatever.

In all leaps the bridle hand should be yielded.

The rider should know his horse well before he attempts a high leap. He should commence, first, over a bar about six inches from the ground at a half

and a gallop, then gradually increase the height according to the powers of the horse.

Several instances, however, have come under our observation, of horsemen having been obliged to *raise their horses* (being heavy in the fore hand) over obstacles by a firm and hard pull.

The degree in which a horse should be gathered and animated in leaping, depends much on his temperament and conformation, and must be left to the judgment and decision of the rider.

In the *standing leap* over the bar, the rider should incline the body forward when the horse rises, so as not to check nor pull him over backward.



This leap is difficult "to sit," being sudden and instantaneous, and, for a moment, leaving the rider in helpless situation.

The *flying leap* (*See plate*), on the contrary, is comparatively easy for the rider and horse; for it is a mere continuation of the canter or gallop, with a slight acceleration of rise and speed while clearing the obstacle.



The body, in this leap, should be erect, but slightly inclined backward or forward, according to the kind of leap, while the horse descends. For instance, if he strikes the fore feet first, the rider should lean a little backward and support him with the rein; if, on the contrary, he comes to the ground with the hind feet first, the rider must sit erect or incline the body forward and check him when his fore feet are about to touch.

After the rider can leap a single bar without having his seat deranged, he should place three or four bars so far apart as to admit of one or two jumps between each one: afterwards close them (according to the





reach of the horse), and compel him to clear them all by a succession of leaps, and *without* an intermediate jump or stride. This is the perfection of leaping.

A ditch for practising the leap, should be twenty feet long, two or four feet wide, and one deep. The length may be increased according to the number of horses leaping together.\*



#### SECTION X.—TO PASSAGE OR MOVE THE HORSE SIDEWISE.

The rider, to passage to the right at a walk, trot, or canter, should sit well forward, clasp with the thighs, bear the bridle hand up and to the right (in order that the shoulder may precede the movement of the

\* The same rules should govern two or more persons leaping the bar or ditch together, as in leaping singly.

haunches), and close the left leg, spur or whip behind the girth. *Vice versa*, passaging to the left.

Whenever a whip is carried, the point or lash should be held downward toward his flank, and out of his sight, lest it alarm or unnecessarily animate him.

As some horses obey more readily the whip than the spur, it may be carried in the left hand (the reins being in the right hand), and applied gently to his flank for the purpose of making him pass his croup to the right. If the left leg is *kept near* during this operation, the horse, in a few trials, will yield to its pressure without the aid of the whip.

## CHAPTER V.

### SECTION I.—ON THE VICES OF THE HORSE,

As resistance in horses proceeds from spirit and vice, mal-formation, mal-treatment, or an improper adjustment of the equipments, the rider before mounting one of this character, should examine minutely every portion of the bridle and saddle affecting him.

The vices to which some horses are addicted, are restiveness, shying, plunging, bolting, rearing, kicking, &c. We will examine them severally, and give as far as practicable, a remedy.

*Restiveness* in a horse consists in turning round and round, moving backward and forward, standing *stock-still*, and sidling or passaging contrary to the will of the rider. It is frequently caused by bad management on the part of the rider, mal-treatment, or an improper adjustment of the equipments. For example: if the bit touches and jars the tushes, it gives him pain or annoys him, and to relieve himself, he throws up his head or draws it to his breast, turns round and round, and, in fact, attempts almost everything to free himself. He likewise does the same when the bit is so high as to gag him, or the crook to touch the palate.

If the saddle binds his shoulders too tightly, or rests

upon the spine, he will crouch and sink under it, and if not immediately relieved, will become *restive*.

As a general rule, when the horse puts himself in an attitude of determined resistance, the rider should not contend with him; but, on the contrary, try to conquer by assisting him in all his movements until he is unwilling to continue his opposition. For example: if he backs, passages, or turns around, the rider should encourage him by all the aids necessary to *compel* the movement; and if he stands immovable, slacken the reins and assume an air of indifference. If the rider cannot effectually subdue him by those means, he never can by harsh treatment.

There are some exceptions to this rule, however, where it becomes necessary for the rider to oppose the horse. For instance: if the rider wishes to go in any direction, and the horse turns from it, he should be assisted in the turn until his head is brought around in the original direction, then urged forward. Again, if the horse passages to an object, the rider should turn his head towards it and then *back* him.

*Shying* consists in a horse's turning or starting suddenly around, forward, backward, or to either side. This proceeds from timidity, a want of confidence in his rider, or being unaccustomed to see or hear the object that alarms him.

To dispel the fears of the horse, the rider should caress and gently urge him to the object, not chastise him, that would increase his fears, and at all subsequent *starts* or shies, he would jump to avoid the punishment as well as the imaginary object of fright. It will be remembered that a horse never shies nor springs towards the object which frightens him; there-

fore, the application of the leg on the side to which he shies, becomes necessary, not only to support and partially check him but for the maintenance of the rider in the seat.

*Rearing* is the most dangerous of all vices, as it endangers the rider when the horse falls over backward.

Horses of this character are generally lower at the croup than the withers, up-headed and tender-mouthed.

Whenever a horse rears, the rider should lean forward, slacken the reins,\* and with the right hand he may seize a lock of the mane, and while he descends, give the spur vigorously,

If the horse does not rear so as to stand erect upon his hind feet, the rider should turn him quickly to the right or left, which will compel him to move a hind foot and throw him off his balance. If these means prove ineffectual, the rider must procure a mild bit with the crook *reversed*, so as to press upon the tongue when the bridle hand acts.

The expedient of vaulting from a horse, while in the act of rearing, and pulling him over backward, seldom fails to cure him of the vice; but if he is saddled, it is attended with dangerous consequences to the rider and horse.

*Stumbling* is a vice which compels the rider to be always on the alert, giving all his attention to the horse.

This is caused by a weakness in the knees, sprain

\* The reins may be separated for the purpose of lowering the hands.

in the shoulders, and from a habit of carrying the head too low

We have already stated (see remarks on the Horse, chapter III.) that the action of the shoulders is confined when the head is too low, and that some horses, from weakness in the forehand, hold the head down and seek the aid of the bit.

To remedy this fault, procure a powerful bit with short branches, and keep him *constantly in hand*.

THE END.

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**A fine of five cents a day is incurred  
by retaining it beyond the specified  
time.**

**Please return promptly.**

AUG 3 '57 H

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